

DOCKET NO: UWYCV186046436S

SUPERIOR COURT

LAFFERTY, ERICA Et Al
V.
JONES, ALEX EMRIC Et Al

JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF WATERBURY
AT WATERBURY

6/1/2022

ORDER

ORDER REGARDING:

05/31/2022 812.00 MOTION FOR PERMISSION TO WITHDRAW APPEARANCE

The foregoing, having been considered by the Court, is hereby:

ORDER:

The hearing on the Motion to Withdraw Appearance will take place on Wednesday June 15, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. Actual service should be made on Alex Jones and Free Speech Systems, LLC. (the remaining Jones defendants) of this motion as well as the notice required by Practice Book Section 3-10(b), which counsel neglected to attach to their motion. Counsel also failed to state on both the motion and the notice the date this case is assigned for trial. Finally, a copy of this court order must be served on the remaining Jones defendants along with the motion and notice.

As the record reflects, Attorney Jay Wolman appeared for all five of the Jones defendants on June 28, 2018. Eight months later, on March 1, 2019, Attorney Wolman was replaced by Pattis & Smith, who filed an in-lieu-of appearance for the five Jones defendants. On February 24, 2020, Attorney Christopher Latronica filed an additional appearance for the five Jones defendants. Five months later, on July 7, 2020, Attorney Wolman returned to the case, having filed new appearances for the five Jones defendants, and replacing both Pattis & Smith and Attorney Latronica. Then, on June 28, 2021, Pattis & Smith filed yet another appearance-in addition to that of Attorney Wolman, but only for the four Jones LLC defendants and not for Alex Jones himself. On February 17, 2022, Attorney Pattis filed an individual appearance for all five Jones defendants, replacing the appearance of Attorney Wolman (this appearance mistakenly included the defendant Genesis Communications Network, Inc., and that mistake was remedied). On March 8, 2022, Attorney Cameron Atkinson, an associate at Pattis & Smith, filed an individual appearance for all five Jones defendants. On March 8, 2022, Pattis & Smith filed another appearance, in addition to the appearances already on file by Attorneys Pattis and Atkinson, apparently for all five Jones defendants.

The motions to withdraw filed by counsel on behalf of the Jones defendants are just as unusual as the tortured history of appearances described above. On May 4, 2020, in separate motions, both Pattis & Smith and Latronica filed Motions to Withdraw Appearance, pursuant to Rules of Professional Conduct 1.16(b)(4), which allows for the filing of a motion to withdraw appearance where “the client insists upon taking action that the lawyer considers repugnant or with which the lawyer has a fundamental disagreement.” Both Motions to Withdraw Appearance were withdrawn on May 28, 2020. Less than a month later, on June 24, 2020, Pattis & Smith filed a second Motion to Withdraw Appearance, indicating that they had been discharged by their clients. That motion was not pursued. The present motion, filed on May 31, 2022, indicates that counsel have (again) been discharged by their clients.

Given this convoluted and bizarre history of appearances, the following, which charts the appearances and motions to withdraw, might be helpful:

6/28/18-3/1/19 Wolman appears for all Jones defendants
3/1/19 Pattis & Smith replaces Wolman, appearing for all Jones defendants
2/24/20 Latronica also appears for all Jones defendants
5/4/20 Latronica files Motion to Withdraw Appearance
5/4/20 Pattis & Smith files Motion to Withdraw Appearance

5/28/20 Both Motions to Withdraw Appearance are withdrawn
6/24/20 Pattis & Smith files a second Motion to Withdraw Appearance
(motion not pursued)
7/7/20 Wolman replaces both Pattis & Smith and Latronica
6/28/21 Pattis & Smith adds an appearance but only for the Jones LLCs
2/17/22 Pattis(individually) replaces Wolman but now appears for all Jones
defendants including Alex Jones
3/8/22 Atkinson appears for all Jones defendants
3/8/22 Pattis & Smith appears for all Jones defendants
5/31/22 Pattis & Smith filed their third Motion to Withdraw Appearance

On March 9, 2022, the court entered an order stating that “(a)ll appearing counsel shall remain as appearing counsel in these consolidated matters, unless a motion to withdraw appearance has been granted by the court. As an example, in lieu of appearances will not remove appearing counsel from the case. Additionally, the clerk will not act on an application to withdraw appearance.” Today, in light of these disturbing circumstances, the court enters the following additional order. Attorney Atkinson, Attorney Pattis, and the law firm of Pattis & Smith are ordered to continue representing the remaining Jones defendants until the court has adjudicated this motion. See Rules of Professional Conduct 1.16(3).

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Judge: BARBARA N BELLIS

This document may be signed or verified electronically and has the same validity and status as a document with a physical (pen-to-paper) signature. For more information, see Section I.E. of the *State of Connecticut Superior Court E-Services Procedures and Technical Standards* (<https://jud.ct.gov/external/super/E-Services/e-standards.pdf>), section 51-193c of the Connecticut General Statutes and Connecticut Practice Book Section 4-4.